

CHRISTIAN TELESCOPE

AND UNIVERSALIST MISCELLANY.

VOL. 4.

"YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE." *Jesus Christ.*

NO. 48

PROVIDENCE, R. I. SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1828.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY,

BY JOHN S. GREENE,

At No. 7, North Main-Street (third story.)

REV. DAVID PICKERING, EDITOR.

TERMS.—The Christian Telescope and Universalist Miscellany is published every Saturday morning, and printed on good paper, with new type, in quarto form of eight pages to each number, with a complete index at the close of the year; making in all 424 pages to the volume.

The paper will be sent to subscribers at \$3 per year; or \$2 if paid within six months from the time of subscribing.

To subscribers who receive their papers by stages (not in the mail) an additional charge of 25 cts. will be made.

No subscriptions received for less than six months, and no paper discontinued till all arrearages are paid.

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Those who are, or may become agents for this paper, will be allowed 12 1-2 cents for every subscriber obtained by them, and 6 1-4 per cent for all monies remitted by them to the Publisher.

Miscellaneous.

"TIS ALL FOR THE BEST."

When we take a survey of the world, we find it is full of troubles. Affliction is the common lot, from the poorest mendicant to the loftiest king. The voice of woe is heard, at times, in every dwelling; from the cottage of clay to the palace of marble.

As no rank is exempt, neither is any period of life unmarked by sorrow. The little vexations of childhood are exchanged for the heart-rending griefs of riper years. How few, even in the morning of life, can be found, who have not been called more than once, to taste the bitter cup. And the aged—ah! their furrowed, care-worn faces show but too plainly that their pilgrimage has been through a weary land. We look through the wide world in vain, for the heart which never ached—the countenance which was never sad; we return from the mournful survey with the assuring assurance that there is none without sorrow—no, not one. How many tears are shed in a single day! How many sighs burst from the broken hearts of the sons and daughters of affliction. O, the wearisome nights, and restless days, and "the sickness of heart by hope deferred!" Were there no other state of existence for us, who could help wishing that he had never been born? But God has graciously revealed to us, that there "remaineth a rest for his people," and that

every sorrow is sent by him to purify and prepare us for it.

"Our hearts are fastened to this world
By strong and numerous ties,
And every sorrow cuts a string,
And urges us to rise."

Viewed in this light the bitterness of grief is taken away. We feel that it is a Father's hand which smites—that "He wounds to heal."

In the government of the universe God has a plan: the ultimate design of which is to produce the greatest possible amount of good to his creatures. Every event which takes place is a part of this plan, and has an important bearing on this object.

Reason says it is right that God should reign; and readily acknowledges that he knows what is best for us; but our hearts are apt to speak another language. We are continually forming schemes for ourselves, and are too much bent on their accomplishment; so that when God's plan crosses ours, we are vexed and disconcerted. The best of Christians are apt to fail here. The world may well question whether they really believe that all things shall work together for good, when they see their faces overcast with the clouds of chagrin and disappointment—when they see them mourn over the loss of one comfort as though the rest of the world were a blank, and their remaining blessings worthless.

It is true in every case, but pre-eminently so in this, that duty and comfort go hand in hand. What can be more desirable than always to feel that "'tis all for the best?" Why it is the grand secret of happiness. The man who believes this with all his heart, has the key which will unlock all the stores of good in earth and heaven. With him nothing can go wrong. Though the whole world be in an uproar he dwells in perfect peace. What has he to fear, who knows his "Father is at the helm?" What can he dread, who believes he shall receive nothing but "good gifts?" Though those gifts may sometimes come in dismal form, they are no less precious on that account. By the eye of faith he sees through the gloomy envelope, and discerns their beauty. Were all to act upon this principle, this world would no longer be called a "wilderness," "a vale of tears," "a thorny maze," "a weary land," "a darksome wild," "a tempestuous ocean." It would be a paradise—a heaven below.

When we are sick, how welcome are the visits of the physician. With what eagerness we swallow his bitter portions. We never complain of his cruelty in imposing on us painful restraints and disagreeable reme-

dies—because we sincerely believe he intends to heal us. Now, our souls are affected with a far more dreadful disease, than any "ills which flesh is heir to," and it will inevitably prove fatal unless timely aid is afforded.—This disorder has been preying upon us ever since our birth, and has been all the while gaining strength. Prosperity is as dangerous to it, as stimulants in a fever. Every trial, every disappointment is sent by the great Physician on purpose to check this moral pestilence. If we take them patiently and submissively, they will have a favourable effect. But if received with a murmuring, rebellious spirit they will only inflame the disease, and render our case more hopeless than ever.

What proof have we, that the physician of the body intends to do us good? Nothing but his own assertion. Have we not the same proof with regard to the Physician of souls? And which has the highest claim to our confidence? For ever banished be our unbelief, Let "'tis all for the best," be our motto.—Let us bind it upon our hearts; and not only when visited by great calamities, but in the little crosses and vexations of every day occurrence, let it check the first risings of impatience. It will spread a heavenly calm through the soul which nothing can disturb.

From the Christian Reflector

NATURE AND EVIL OF SIN.

The Scriptures no where assert that sin is an infinite evil, nor is it possible it should be such, because it is the act of a finite being, and it is impossible that the actions of a finite being should be infinite. The infiniteness of the Divine Lawgiver no more constitutes the transgression of his laws an infinite evil, than it does obedience to those laws an infinite good. If sin be in its nature an infinite evil, every sin must be such, and there must be as many infinite evils as there are sins; but if every sin be an infinite evil, requiring an infinite satisfaction, how could one such satisfaction be more than an atonement for one sin? If every sin, or, at least, some one sin, be not an infinite evil, all the sins ever committed, taken in the mass, cannot amount to an infinite evil; for those things which are finite or limited, however added together or multiplied, can never become infinite or unlimited. Sin cannot be an infinite evil, because the evil of it extendeth not to God, the only infinite Being, but is limited to creatures who are all finite. Both the sin and the evil of it, that is the mischief it does, are evidently bounded, therefore not infinite. To say that sin is infinite, is to exclude all degrees in criminality and guilt, which is contrary to scripture, common sense,

and evident matter of fact. If sin be an infinite evil, it cannot expose the sinner to infinite wrath and punishment; because to be just, punishment must be proportioned to crimes, and the scriptures throughout describe the punishment which God has threatened as such.

Admitting, for argument sake, that sin is an infinite evil, and deserves infinite punishment, it by no means follows that God cannot pardon it without infinite satisfaction; seeing he has nowhere said that he requires such a satisfaction. Before it be asserted that without an infinite satisfaction sinners cannot be saved, it ought to be proved, even on the supposition that sin is an infinite evil, that the mercy of God is not also infinite, and that the God of infinite mercy whose prerogative it is to do whatsoever he pleaseth, cannot, in the exercise of his mercy, forgive sin freely, however great it may be; for until this be proved, such a satisfaction cannot be shown to be necessary.

(FROM THE OLIVE BRANCH.)
PREDESTINATION.

The ways of God are impartial; and in the end will be found equally and universally good to all his creatures; if not to the same degree, that is, if his goodness is not equally manifested to all, and to the same extent, it is the like in *kind*. Hence, if all moral beings, as men, are destined to an eternal existence, in which they will be susceptible of pain or pleasure, whatever he has done for one, in relation to this eternal state, we may rest assured he has done for all. A contrary supposition would suppose him to be capable of infinite and eternal *cruelty*! With this view of the divine character, the following testimony of the apostles, must give the greatest comfort and consolation to all. Eph. i. 2—12, inclusive.

"Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love:

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved:

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace:

"Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence:

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; &c."

Let us be assured of the truth of the above testimony, and it must be perceived that it makes no difference to us whether we are

gathered in as the "first or last fruits of his creation."

Predestination does not depend in the least degree on *man*, but on the "wisdom which is from above," which is "without partiality."—To apply such testimony therefore, to a part of mankind, is very improper. It is in this way that the scriptures are often wrested to our own destruction—to the destruction of that peace and comfort there is in believing.

A LESSON FOR MONARCHS.

During his march to the conquest of the world, Alexander, the Macedonian, came to a people in Africa, who dwelt in a remote and secluded corner, in peaceful huts, and knew neither war nor conqueror. They led him to their hut and their chief, who received him hospitably, placed before him golden dates, golden figs, and bread of gold. 'Do you eat gold in this country?' said Alexander. 'I take it for granted,' (replied the Chief) 'that thou wert able to find eatables in thine own country. For what reason then art thou come among us?' 'Your gold has not tempted me thither,' said Alexander 'but I would become acquainted with your manners and customs.' 'So be it' rejoined the other; 'sojourn among us as long as it pleaseth thee.' At the close of this conversation two citizens entered, as into their court of justice. The plaintiff said, 'I bought of this man a piece of land, and in making a deep drain through it, I found a treasure. This is not mine, for I only bargained for the land, and not for any treasure that might be concealed beneath it: and yet the former owner of the land will not receive it! The defendant answered, "I hope I have a conscience, as well as my fellow citizen. I sold him the land with all its contingent as well as existing advantages, and consequently the treasure inclusively."

The Chief who was also their Supreme Judge, recapitulated their words, in order that the parties might see whether or not he understood them right. Then after some reflection he said, "thou hast a son friend, I believe?"—"Yes." "Well, then, let thy son marry thy daughter and bestow the treasure on the young couple, for a marriage portion." Alexander seemed surprised and perplexed.—"Think you my sentence unjust?" the Chief asked him. "O no!" replied Alexander, "but it astonishes me." "And how then," replied the Chief, "would the case have been decided in your country?" "To confess the truth," said Alexander, "we should have taken both parties into custody, and have seized the treasure for the King's use." "For the King's use!" exclaimed the Chief, "Does the sun shine on that country?" "O yes." "Does it rain there?" "Assuredly." "Wonderful!—But are there tame animals in the country, that live on the grass and green herbs?"—"Very many, and of many kinds." "Ah, that must then be the cause," said the chief, "for the sake of those innocent animals the all-gracious Being continues to let the sun shine and

the rain drop down on your own country;—since its inhabitants are unworthy of such blessings."

The Farmer.—No man, one would think, would feel so immediately his dependence on God, as the husbandman. For all his peculiar blessings he is invited to look immediately to the bounty of heaven. No secondary cause stands between him and his Maker.—To him are essential the regular succession of the seasons, and the timely fall of the rain, the general warmth of the sun, the sure productiveness of the soil, and the certain operation of the laws of nature, which must appear to him nothing less than the varied exertion of omnipotent energy.

In the country, we seem to stand in the midst of the great theatre of God's power, and we feel an unusual proximity to our Creator. The blue and tranquil sky spreads itself over our heads, and we acknowledge the intrusion of no secondary agent in unfolding this vast expanse. Nothing but Omnipotence can work up the dark horrors of the tempest, dart the flames of lightning, and roll along resounding rumour of the thunder. The breeze wafts to his senses the odour of God's beneficence, the voice of God's power is heard in the resounding of the forest and the varied forms of life, activity and pleasure, which he observes at every step in the field, lead him irresistibly, one would think, to the source of being, beauty and joy.

How suspicious such a life to the noble sentiments of devotion! Besides, the situation of the husbandman is peculiarly favorable, it would seem, to purity and simplicity of moral sentiment. He is brought acquainted chiefly with the real and native wants of mankind.—Employed solely in bringing food out of the earth, he is not liable to be fascinated with the fictitious pleasures, the unnatural wants, the fashionable follies, and tyrannical vices of a more busy and splendid life.

Family Government.—"I do believe that I have the very worst children that ever lived," exclaimed Mrs. Johnson, as she seized two of the little ones, violently by their throats and shut them down cellar, where she said the "booger" was. Mr. Barton was not a stranger in the family, though the paternal dignity of his demeanor always inspired her with an ambition to have her family appear well when he was present. "I must take the liberty to remonstrate with you, Mrs. Johnson," said Mr. B. "in regard to your manner of producing obedience among your children. Do you really believe that yours are the worst children that ever lived? and do you think of rendering them better by violence and terrors? The half distracted screams of the children were heard from below, and Mrs. J. sunk into her chair in tears. "Why no," she replied, "my children generally behave pretty well, but when any person is here they seem to act like Sancho Panza." "You mistake Mrs. J. Your children conduct no worse when a visitor is

present than at other times; but wishing then to have them behave more decently than usual, and being disappointed in your wishes, you the more readily notice their extravagances, and become enured at that of which your own management is in fact the cause. Teach your children to behave well when no stranger is present, and you will have no occasion for mortification when they are in company.—Your fault is here: You do not carry a steady hand in your discipline over them. At one time you indulge them in all their desires—many of which it must be expected are improper ones; and at another, you fly into a rage and beat them when seeking the most innocent gratifications. Under such circumstances, a child must indeed be a paragon not to behave disorderly. If you would have good children, let me tell you never to let your passions run away with your better judgment. Be uniform, temperate mild and yet determined yourself, and your little ones will soon fulfil your wishes. Give no command which you do not mean shall be obeyed. Make no promises, which you do not faithfully fulfil.—Threaten no punishment, which you are not determined strictly to inflict in case of disobedience; and let your chastisements be always proportioned to the magnitude of the offence. In your whole government let the spirit of parental affection be discovered by your offspring. Convince them not by words only, but by your actions also, that you require nothing of them which is not calculated to promote their advantage, and that you punish them only in love, with a view to make them better and happier. In this way you will rear a family of likely children.

“And let me tell you to beware how you think to reform your offspring by frightening them into obedience; by making them dread the dark, and filling their heads with superstitious notions about “boogers,” as you call them, and “ghosts,” “witches,” &c. Go now immediately and bring your children back—repent of your folly and make an alteration in your discipline over them. Speak the truth invariably, to your children, and they will speak the truth to you.”

“In short, carry a steady hand;—never correct your children in anger: let love govern all your dealings with them, and by the influence of your own examples, which are more powerful than all precepts, teach them patience, temperance, wisdom and virtue.”

Mrs. J. heard the frank remarks of her friend in respectful deference; called her children to her; wiped away their tears; spoke the words of maternal tenderness; combed their silken locks; gave them permission to go and amuse themselves in some innocent recreations; and resolved, most firmly, to set herself about the work of governing herself, that she might the better be prepared to govern her ill managed but yet lovely children.

The Franklin Association of Universalists will meet at Dover, Vt. 15th of October next.

The Majesty and Supremacy of the Scriptures.

I will confess to you, that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of Gospel hath its influence on my heart. Pursue the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they compared with the scriptures! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious secretary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses!—What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation?—When Pluto described his imaginary good man loaded with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ: The resemblance was so striking, that all the Fathers perceived it.

What pre-possession, what blindness must it be to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion there is between them? Socrates dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however had before put them in practice: he had only to say therefore what they had done and to reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice;—Leonidas had given up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people before Socrates recommended sobriety; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only hath given us both precept and example? The greatest wisdom was made known amongst the most bigoted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honor to the vilest people on earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates in receiving the cup of poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating torments, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the

life and death of Jesus are those of a Saint—Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friends, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero.

Rousseau.

A SERMON,

Delivered at the Recognition of the First Universalist Church in Watertown, July 23, 1828.

BY REV. T. WHITEMORE.

“This do in remembrance of me.”

Luke xxii. 19.

[Concluded from page 375.]

I shall pass over many corruptions less worthy of notice, that I may reduce the subject to proper limits. The Lord's supper soon began to be considered necessary to salvation, and to the obtaining of the favor of God. And we also find, quite early, some advances toward the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation. Christians began to consider the bread and wine to be changed, after prayers were offered. Something divine had then entered into them. And we may say the same of the cloth which covered the table, and the table itself, and the utensils.—They were thought to be holy, and in time people began to worship them. They were supposed to possess sense and sanctity.—Some inquired whether the bread might not in some sense, be the *real body*, and the wine, the *real blood* of Christ. It was thought wrong to commit the blood of Christ to so frail a thing as glass. Jerome reproaches a bishop with this, as he was a rich man, and able to get better. Churches sent portions of bread to neighboring churches, as a token of communion. But what was much worse than this, the bread was thought to be useful in a medicinal point of view. It was thought a means of preserving people when absent from home, in journeys and upon voyages.—And the priests used to keep a quantity of the consecrated element to distribute occasionally as it might be wanted. It was given to the sick; and the christian fathers mention many cases of particular diseases to which this remedy was applied. This was done solely on account of the virtue which was communicated to the bread by the prayer of the priest. The ancient christians sometimes buried it with the dead, thinking, no doubt, that it would be of great use to them during their long journey which they were supposed to take. Thus did the church go on in the work of corrupting this ordinance. People's notions were advancing rapidly toward the doctrine of transubstantiation. They began to use spoons in eating the bread, that

they might not drop the crumbs. They thought too that they must eat it with the body in a particular position. And among other superstitious customs, we find that they were in the habit of mixing some of the wine with ink, to sign writings of a peculiarly solemn nature. "Thus pope Theodore, in the 7th century, signed the condemnation and deposition of Pyrrhus the Monothelite; it was used at the condemnation of Photius by the fathers of the council of Constantinople in 809; and Charles the bald, and Bernard, count of Barcelona, also signed a treaty with the sacramental wine in 844." The practice of the supper was enveloped in so much mystery, and formal solemnity, that the people were afraid to commune and absented from the table; and at one time the priests only partook, the people looking on and joining in the prayers only.

But we have now almost come to the height of superstition with respect to this ordinance. The priests had made addition after addition, and one would think they might have been satisfied by doing what we have noticed.—We must yet rise to the summit of superstition. Paschasius Radbert, a monk of Corbie, in France, was the first, I think, boldly to assert one of the most absurd doctrines ever believed, and yet one that came afterwards to be very generally believed. I mean the doctrine of transubstantiation. What we mean by transubstantiation is, the change of bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ. The believers in this doctrine contended, that the bread and wine were changed by the priest's prayer, into the body and blood of Christ; the very same body which was born of Mary, crucified upon the cross, and raised from the dead. The priests did not attempt to prove this so much from reason, as from the testimony of ghosts and apparitions, which they alleged they had seen.—One priest alleged, that he saw the bread become Christ, in his full form, as a babe; that he clasped him to his bosom, and afterwards beheld him in the form of bread again.—When this doctrine was first advanced, it met with much opposition. Nearly two centuries passed away before it could with propriety be called the doctrine of the majority. But as soon as the priests saw that the doctrine was received by the multitude, and that it gave people a reverence for them who could change bread and wine into the literal body and blood of Jesus, they began generally to advocate it, and Pope Innocent III. at the council of Lateran, in 1215, by a decree, made it an article of faith. In this age of the world, it is hard to believe that people were ever so infatuated as to think a prayer could change the nature of bread and wine, especially to change them into the real body of Christ, that hung on the cross, and the blood spilt upon the ground. But such was the case. Many, I have no doubt, sincerely believed it; and the clergy were well enough pleased with it; for they loved to be exalted in the people's estimation, even if it had been

at the expense of reason and truth. The reader of ecclesiastical history cannot but be astonished at the daring impiety of some of the clergy who believed this doctrine.—They seemed intoxicated with a love of the power they thought they possessed. One of them spoke in this way: "On our altars Jesus Christ obeys all the world. He obeys the priest, let him be where he will, at every hour, at his simple word. They carry him whither they please. He goes into the mouth of the wicked as well as the righteous. He makes no resistance, he does not hesitate one moment." And it is said, some of the priests boasted, that they had even more power than Mary, the mother of Jesus, because they could create their creator whenever they pleased.

The doctrine of transubstantiation gave rise to a practice approaching very near to idolatry, known by the name of *the elevation of the host*. This practice consisted in carrying about the streets, upon an elevated table, or stand, prepared for the purpose, with the greatest pomp and magnificence, a portion of the consecrated bread, which was adored by the gaping multitude. This practice very naturally resulted from the belief, that, by consecration, the bread was changed into the real body of Jesus.

Although we now have arrived at the summit of superstition on this subject, we have not noticed the full extent of it. We are at the top of the hill; but we came up by degrees, and we must go down by degrees. People did not throw off their superstition all at once. It is a moral sickness of which it takes some time to cure one. But they began to grow wiser, and their wisdom increased. They went down the hill, step by step, as they had come up. As this corruption began very early, and went farther than any other, so it was with great difficulty rectified, and indeed it may not be wholly done to this day.

The subject of the Lord's Supper was one of great interest at the time of the Reformation. Luther, although a reformer in many important points, did but little to correct the error of the church concerning the Eucharist. Notwithstanding he professed to reject the doctrine of transubstantiation, nevertheless he maintained, "that the partakers of the Lord's Supper received, along with the bread and wine, the real body and blood of Christ." But Carlosstadt and Zuinglius took the proper ground, maintaining, in that early day, that the body and blood of Christ were not present in the Eucharist; but that the bread and wine were *signs and symbols*, designed to excite in the minds of Christians the remembrance of the sufferings and death of the divine Saviour, and of the benefits which arise from it. It should not be supposed that this great advance was made without disapprobation. No, even Luther himself, and other milder men, highly disapproved of it.—Zuinglius, the Swiss reformer, was a man of capacious and penetrating mind. He was far advanced before Luther in the march of

improvement. Had he not been cut off by premature death, the age of the Reformation, we may say, would have been distinguished by a glory exceeding that by which it is now characterised.

The effect of the superstition we have named was long and widely felt, and was principally injurious in exciting a general dread of participation of the ordinance.—Fear seized the church, fear which increased with its errors, and which can decrease only with them. As we are not rid of all the error, so we are not rid of all the injurious fear.—Many there are, at this day, desirous of observing the communion rite, and who are fully qualified therefor; but who are restrained by remnants of the errors of which I have so freely spoken.

One of the principal restraints which lies upon them, arises from the belief, that they must receive some mysterious change, and even a radical change of nature, before they are qualified. From these remarks I do not wish it inferred, that I do not believe in conversion. It is, I think, my belief of that doctrine, in its purity, which leads me to wish to rescue it from misapprehension. But I am persuaded, that the views of conversion of which I have spoken, are radically wrong.—The Scriptures urge upon us a change,—a change of faith, and a change of conversation, when these are as they ought not to be. But they urge upon us no change of nature. Let a person unacquainted with the present popular theories of divinity take the Bible, and read the account of the conversion of the three thousand upon the day of Pentecost; of the Ethiopian, by Philip; of the Jailor, by Paul and Silas; and of Paul himself while on his way to Damascus, and the common doctrine of conversion would not occur to his mind. The conversion of all these was a conversion to the belief that *Jesus Christ is the son of God*. A profession of this was the only profession they were required to make. There cannot one instance be found in the Scriptures, in which a person was required to be converted, in the sense in which I now use the word, while he exercised faith in Jesus as the son of God. This is an interesting subject; and I should, did time permit, confirm what I have said by a particular notice of some of those cases of conversion recorded in the New Testament. Read the account of the calling of the disciples, and see if they professed, or if they were required to profess to have experienced a change, like that on which people now insist.

To be continued.

Double Stars—Professor Struvel of Dordrecht, in a recent pamphlet, enumerates no fewer than 3063 double stars in the northern hemisphere alone; having by means of the great refracting telescope by Fraunhofer, increased his knowledge to that number from 440 which were all he had observed two years ago. He further states, that some of the stars are more than double.

From the (Plymouth) Spirit of the Pilgrims.
**UNIVERSALIST MEETING
 HOUSE.**

On Tuesday last, with much pleasure, we witnessed the raising of the Meeting House, which our friends in Halifax are now erecting. It was a joyous occasion to all who are favorable to the spread of the doctrine of God's Universal Grace. Previous to the rearing the structure, we had the happiness of addressing a respectable number of persons, who had collected on the occasion, briefly stating our reasons for dissenting from the doctrines held by our fathers, advancing some of the evidences on which we founded our faith, adverting to its unparalleled spread throughout our country, noticing the motives which induced our friends to engage in building a house of worship, and asking the blessing of our Common Parent on this laudable undertaking. At one moment, however, the joy of the occasion was interrupted by an accident, which we feared would prove serious. Mr. Hill, one of the contractors for building the house, by a mis-step fell from the beam to the floor. But thanks to that Being whose tender mercies are over all his works, he appeared to receive no serious injury; being able to continue on the ground until the raising was completed, and to retire without assistance.

As a favorable indication, it gratifies us to be able to state that this raising was accomplished without the use of ardent spirits. This Meeting-house, though small, we think, will be very handsome and convenient. It stands in a beautiful situation, not far from the centre of the town: is 26 by 40 feet, with a front gallery for singers; estimated to accommodate from 300 to 400 people.

N. B. Our brethren in the ministry, if travelling this way, are invited by the Committee to call on them, and dispense to their society the word of life.

BLASPHEMY.

Mr. DREW.—The following is from Portland *Christian Mirror*, of Friday, 25th July, 1828.

"Whilst the bodies of rich sinners are entombed, often with the vain ostentation of the survivors, 'they lift up their eyes in hell begging in torment; neither God, nor saints, nor angels, will show them any mercy; even pious parents who here prayed for and wept over their children, will hereafter approve of their final condemnation.'"

Now Sir, in my opinion the above is a blasphemous piece. These "pious parents," loved their children while here in this world and prayed for and wept over them, yea, rather than to have seen them suffering in literal flames of fire, they would have endeavored to save them, even at a risk of their own lives; yet, according to the *Mirror* authority, they are to become so much worse, so much more impious, so much more hard-hearted, so much more unmerciful, and finally so much more unlike a christian in every respect when they get

home to heaven, that they can sit and see and hear the distressing and heart-chilling groans of their once beloved children burning in a dreadful hell of fire and brimstone without the least emotion!! Yea, although they might cast a longing, agonizing look for mercy, these "pious parents" will "approve" of their being denied by their "God" the "Saints," and the "angels!"

Ye parents! think seriously and candidly upon these things. Can it be possible that you possess a more merciful, humane and benevolent feeling in this imperfect world than you will when you arrive home to heaven! A. B. Freeport, July 26th, 1828.

REASON.

We have, if we mistake not, heard our Methodist as well as our Calvinistic brethren declaim against the use of reason in matters of religion. To such we recommend the following observations of Dr. ADAM CLARKE. We quote from his concluding remarks at the end of his commentaries on the New-Testament.

"THE SACRED WRITINGS are a system of pure, unsophisticated reason, proceeding from the immaculate mind of God: in many places it is true, vastly elevated beyond what the reason of man could have devised or found out; but in no case contrary to human reason. They are addressed not to the passions, but to the reason, of man; every command is urged with reasons of obedience and every promise and threatening founded on the most evident reason and propriety. The whole, therefore, are to be rationally understood and rationally interpreted. He who would discharge reason from this, its noblest province, is a friend in his heart to the antichristian maxim, Ignorance is the mother of devotion. Revelation and reason go hand in hand: faith is the servant of the former and the friend of the latter: while the Spirit of God, which gives the revelation, improves and exalts the reason, and gives energy and effect to faith.

"We have gone too far when we have said, 'such and such doctrines should not be subjected to rational investigation, being doctrines of pure revelation.' I know no such doctrine in the Bible. the doctrines of this book are doctrines of eternal reason: and they are revealed because they are such. Human reason could not have found them out; but when revealed reason can both apprehend and comprehend them. * * * Some men, it is true, cannot reason: and therefore they declaim against reason: and proscribe it in the examination of religious truth. Were all the nation of this mind, Mother Church might soon re-assume her ascendancy, and "feed us with Latin masses and wafer gods."

"No man either can or should believe a doctrine that contradicts reason."

We should like to inquire if the doctrines of the trinity, of the infinite punishment of mankind for their finite offences, [and this too by their Maker and Father,]—doctrines to which Dr. Clarke himself subscribes,—do

not in fact "contradict reason"? or can reason "both apprehend and comprehend them"? We think the candid of every sect must answer in the negative. According then to Dr. Clarke himself, "no man should believe" either of those doctrines.

CATHOLIC PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

A distinguished champion of the doctrines of the Reformation, having lately, in the sister kingdom, drawn a large concourse of people, both Protestants and Papists, to listen to his harangues, a priest of the latter communion took occasion to warn his flock against the eloquence of this heretic, in the following manner. "You all know that Mr. S*** there is preaching against our holy faith. Mr. S. I know very well—he is a *dacent* enough man, and I know'd his father too—he was a very good lawyer, and a *dacent* man also. Mr. S. is working for a bit of bread, and small blame to him—but look at me now; I repeat it, look at me now; I am the man in the moon—I say again, my hearers, I am the man in the moon. But what is Mr. S. a little dog; and he turns up his snout at me, and barks thus: bow—vow—vow—vow." His imitation of the barking of a dog was so natural, that it spoiled the gravity of his whole audience, and convinced those persons who were conversant with the prophetic writings, that however he might be one of those "greedy dogs which can never have enough," he was not one of those "dumb dogs which cannot bark."

More trouble for the Pope.—We learn from an English Magazine, what we have not seen stated elsewhere, that in the Chamber of Deputies of Buenos Ayres, on the 10th of October, Senor Freige, a member of the Ecclesiastical Committee, read a very long paper, calling on the Government to solicit the Pope to relieve the clergy from the penalties which at present attach to their marrying; and at the same time to assure his Holiness, that *even if his consent should be withheld, the Assembly could not avoid revoking the law of celibacy*. What disposition was made of the paper, we are not informed; but the very fact of its being presented, and especially by a member of the Ecclesiastical Committee, is proof that already no inconsiderable progress has been made by the citizens of that Republic, in loosing the chains of papal superstition.—N. Y. Obs.

GOOD ADVICE.

Quit your pillow and go about your business, if you have any, is its first injunction; if not, seek some. Let the sun's first beam shine on your head in the morning, and you shall not want a hat to defend you from its scorching ray at noon—Earn your breakfast before you eat it, and the sheriff shall not deprive you of your supper. Pursue your calling with diligence, and your creditors shall not interrupt you.—Be temperate, and the physician shall look in vain for your name on his day-book.

There are many, whose hypocrisy is of the grossest character; and yet consists in being frank and open hearted: that is—they are just what circumstances require them to be. If with the serious, they can pray—if with the jovial, they can jest—if with the lewd, they can be obscure—if with the profane, they can swear: and aside from all this, receive the universal commendation of being no hypocrites—of being frank and open hearted!

Telescope and Miscellany.

"Earnestly contend for the faith."

PROVIDENCE, SATURDAY, AUG. 23. 1828.

JUDICIAL PROSCRIPTION.

(CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 357.)

Having shown in a former number the groundless charge of the Editor of the *Post*,—that Universalism strikes a blow at the very system of the christian religion; we shall now proceed to notice in the closing part of the sentence, another distinct charge.

5. To give countenance to his slanderous accusation, he charges Universalism with "denying the divine Author of christianity all right to enforce any of his precepts and requirements, by any sanctions other than of a threatened temporal punishment."

This statement is a gross misrepresentation of Universalism. Mr. Smith never saw, in any Universalist publication, a sentiment like the above, nor ever heard such a sentiment expressed by any understanding Universalist. Even those that contend that the doctrine of future punishment is not taught in the scriptures, admit the divine right to punish men in a future state; and that they will there be punished, provided their situation be such as to render punishment necessary. The only charitable excuse which can be found for the mad ravings of this fanatical Editor, is his ignorance of the doctrine which he affects to dispute.

6. Mr. S. to empty the vial of his bitterness, proceeds to charge those Universalists who deny the doctrine of future punishment, with denying all obligation to speak the truth! These are his words—"Now whether a man, who denies all obligation to speak the truth,—obligations drawn from a regard to a future state of punishment for liars,—shall be permitted to testify under an oath which, expressly takes hold of futurity, and professes to believe in its rewards and punishments, is certainly a question of very vital importance to our rights as citizens, as well as appellants at a court of justice."

From this language it is perfectly apparent, that in the opinion of Mr. S. every man who disbelieves in future punishment, denies all obligation to speak the truth!—And is this gentleman willing to have the public believe that his only inducement to speak the truth, is the belief that he shall be punished in a future state in case he utters falsehood? Should we pronounce him a man so inclined to false-

hood that nothing but the dread of future punishment would influence him to preserve truth in his communications, would he not complain that we were uncharitable, censorious, unjust and defamatory? And yet, he virtually acknowledges himself to be such a character, by laboring to persuade his readers that all obligation to speak the truth is drawn from the doctrine of future punishment!

We frankly acknowledge that we should fear to tempt this man, lest the only safeguard which he acknowledges, should fail him in the hour of trial. It may, indeed, be of some use to keep him in something like decent limits, so far as it relates to a determined perseverance in falsehood and wickedness, to the last hour of life, may be concerned; but it is, to say the least a most grovelling principle of action: Yet if a conviction of the divine goodness, and the evidences of God's saving grace will not produce in him a sense of obligation, let him be tortured by his fears until his suffering shall humble his heart, and bring him to the delayed confession, "that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance." After all, we are not satisfied that his belief in future punishment is of the least service to him, so far as his veracity is concerned; for we are furnished with proof from his own statements that he has grossly misrepresented the Universalists and their doctrine; and pray what evidence has he given that he would not be guilty of the same misrepresentations if he were writing under the solemnity of an oath?

7. This gentleman gravely tells his readers that the oath takes of futurity, and professes to believe in future punishment. By future punishment, he is understood, punishment in a future world.

We will here transcribe the oath, that our readers may see how totally destitute of fact, is the statement of Mr. Smith—

"You solemnly swear, that the testimony you shall give, shall be the truth; the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—So help you God."

Now where is the profession, in this oath, of a belief in future punishment? Not the shadow of such a belief is to be found in the oath. But reader, we will tell you where it may be found—to wit, in the exclusive sermons of some hare-brained Clergyman—in the puritanical decision of a *Litchfield Court*, and in the mad ravings of a *Litchfield Editor*.

In conclusion, we would offer this Editor a passing remark upon his own competency, and that, upon his own reasoning. Of the Roman Catholics, he says they should not be admitted to testify: and assigns as a reason, that they "profess to believe that their temporal priest can pardon all sin, however heinous." &c.

It is obvious from his disposition to exclude all *Predestinarians* as well as *Catholics*, that this gentleman is an *Arminian*; consequently, believes that sincere repentance, any time

before death, will be effectual in obtaining a complete pardon of his sins. Now the difference between him and the Roman Catholic appears to be this—The Catholic has to repent of his sins, pay his priest for absolution, and pass through purgatory to arrive at heaven—while Mr. Smith, only repents, saves his fee, avoids purgatory and enters heaven without the smell of fire or the stain of pollution!

Query—Upon Mr. Smith's own premises and reasoning, which ought to be rejected, as the most incompetent, the Catholic or himself?

Tendering Mr. Smith our forgiveness for his unmerited abuse, with our best wishes that he may shortly be unburdened of his persecuting zeal;—We bid him a friendly adieu.

Editor.

FOR THE TELESCOPE AND MISCELLANY. MORAL REFLECTIONS.

"Hope thou in God."—*Psal. cxviii. 5.*

Mankind are naturally possessed of desires, of some sort or other, which are essential to their well being, and on the gratification of which frequently depends their happiness or disquietude. But men's desires are not always correct, nor do they always embrace proper objects or events; and consequently they are extremely liable to be deceived in their accomplishment, as certain desired objects, when obtained, frequently produce a directly contrary result from what they had been led to anticipate. It is, therefore, all important that we place our desires upon worthy objects, in which we cannot be mistaken.

We are exhorted by the words of our text to hope in God: Now as hope or desire may be defined, confidence in the expectation of some good—or pleasing anticipations; it is evident we cannot hope for any thing, or in any thing, which we know is productive of injury to us. It is morally impossible for any man to entertain a desire to his own disadvantage—for "no man hateth his own soul"—or good. Before we can hope in God, it becomes absolutely necessary, therefore, that we have an intimate and a definite knowledge of his character. This knowledge can be obtained through no other medium but the declaration of his own will and designs, and this declaration can only be corroborated by the history of his dealings with man. If the revelation, or declaration of his mind and will, and his dealings with man from age to age are of an uniform character, and all evidently tend to the accomplishment of one and the same design, we cannot entertain a doubt as to their real nature, and have the best of all assurance that we may safely rely upon them; for there can be no duplicity where the pretensions of any being, and his actions are in strict accordance. If, therefore, God, in his dealings with mankind, evinces his love for them, and his actions are corroborated by his uniform declarations, we have the strongest assurance of his will and intentions, next to demonstration, that can possibly be given us.

The object of man's hope, or what he is

led to expect from the hand of God, is life and immortality; and this hope is predicated on the strongest assurance that can be given;—viz: the oath of Jehovah.

He declares by his apostle (Heb. vi. 18.) "wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us:" In his epistle to Titus, i. 2. the apostle declares the nature of this hope—"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." We have then the evidence that God has promised us eternal life, and that he has confirmed this promise by an oath. If this is a possibility of any doubt in this promise, we have corresponding evidence in his dealings with man, from the morn of creation to the present time; all of which prove him to be a God of Love—whose tender mercies are over all the works of his hands. The fact, therefore, that he does confer blessings upon us in this life, is corroborative evidence that he will continue so to do, so long as we have a being—or eternally. The apostle tells us, that with men "an oath is the end of all strife;" if then God has condescended to sanction his promises by the solemnity of an oath, and has uniformly dealt with man in accordance with the tenor of his promises, who can doubt the accomplishment of his will—to save all mankind eternally in Christ. Certainly, no one. But possessed of such evidence we can freely and with confidence lay hold on this hope, which is set before us in the gospel, and trust through his mercy, to receive this promised blessing—life and immortality beyond the grave.

That this hope is not a mere speculative principle, which does not effect the heart and the actions of men, we have the best of evidence, for it is the hope of good to ourselves; and no man can sincerely desire or hope for any thing, the promise of possessing which would not produce in his mind the liveliest sense of gratitude to the giver; and as gratitude is the strongest and the noblest emotion which can sway the human heart, it cannot fail of producing actions in conformity to the wishes and desires of him that promises; or gives the the blessing. Then the stronger our hope is in the promises of God, and the greater our confidence in the accomplishment of our desires, the greater will be our love for him, and the more earnest shall we be to imitate him, and to live and act in accordance to his wishes and commands. John says, (I John iii. 3.) "every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he (Christ) is pure." And if a man possessed of this hope purifieth himself, in consequence of the influence which the thing hoped for has upon his heart and affections, it necessarily follows, on the other hand, that he who is destitute of this hope will not be inclined to

holiness or purity. It also follows of necessity that the stronger this hope is, in man, the greater influence it must have upon his life and actions.

This is the nature and essence of the gospel, as understood by Universalists; and which, notwithstanding its purity, has obtained among men, the appellation of a demoralizing system. It embraces not only the hope of eternal life for ourselves, individually, but trusts in the promises of God, for the ultimate purification and happiness of an emancipated universe of intelligences; and is consequently productive of a greater stimulus to purity of life. No man who sincerely believes and hopes in it, can be a vicious or a bad man—but his mind will be warmed with love to God, and his heart will be led to submit itself to his pleasure; and he will be induced to act in accordance to his will and desires.—That we, one and all, may be possessed of this hope, to its fullest extent, may God in his mercy grant, and may its possession lead us to the performance of our duty to God, and our fellow men. W. S.

TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We are extremely sorry to learn that the means we have taken to collect our accounts has produced some uneasiness among our patrons. Gentlemen, we should be pleased to retain your patronage, if with your names you are disposed to aid us with the means; but you must be aware that without the means your names are of little value to us. They will not purchase our paper, nor pay our workmen. We shall always endeavour to make our publication worthy of your patronage, and should be pleased to continue your names for years upon our list, but cannot do it, unless you are disposed to meet your bills punctually. We are constrained to say once for all, that the situation of this establishment renders it indispensably necessary that all demands *should* be paid by October ensuing, and that they *must* be paid as soon after as may be, whatever dissatisfaction it may cause. It gives us pain to bring our pecuniary affairs so often before our patrons, but we trust they possess sufficient discernment to understand the absolute necessity which exists in bringing old affairs to a speedy close, and our unpleasant situation from the want of the means to discharge our obligations, contracted for the publication of this paper.

PUBLISHER.

The relish of the mind is as various as that of the body, and like that too, may be altered; and 'tis a mistake to think, that men cannot change the displeasingness of indifference, that exist in actions, into pleasure and desire, if they will do but what is in their power; a due consideration will do it in some cases, and custom in most.

The Old Colony Association of Universalists will meet at Duxbury, (Mass.) on the first Wednesday, (3d day) of September next.

Poetry.

The following lines were written some time since, in allusion to the arbitrary decision of the Supreme Court of "ERRORS" of the State of Connecticut. We beg the forgiveness of their author for unintentionally neglecting to give them an earlier insertion.

FOR THE TELESCOPE AND MISCELLANY.

ABUSE OF POWER.

See smiling, sycophants on grandeur wait,
And cringing bow to fools because they're great,
Because their coffers are with silver lin'd
Though base and sordid are there grov'ling minds,
Let him but speak who has a wealthy name,
And loud resounds the clarion trump of fame;
But if obscurity should mark his birth,
Or fortune frown, it matters not his worth,
Contempt pours on him whoso'er he goes,
And o'er his words oblivion's mantle throws.
With power invested, perjury is truth,
Of that divested you are nought, forsooth!
Your oath's not taken if you dare to prove,
That God our Father is a "God of Love."
Unite with Church and State then all is well,
But if dissenting, you are doomed to hell.
Freedom! where art thou—on our happy land?
If so, protect thy little, chosen band;—
Quicken thy march, nor let infuriate zeal
Thy vot'ries rob of their most sacred weal.
Unfurl thy banner, let the world behold
Thy glittering spear, more brilliant far than gold.
Till power despotic shrinks by thee dismayed,
And truth triumphant rears her lofty head.

E.

OMNIPRESENCE OF THE DEITY.

Above—below—where'er I gaze,
Thy guiding finger, Lord, I view,
Traced in the midnight planet's blaze,
Or glistening in the morning dew;
Whate'er is beautiful or fair,
Is but thine own reflection there.
I hear thee in the stormy wind;
That turns the ocean wave to foam;
Nor less thy wondrous power I find,
When summer airs around me roam;
The tempest and the calm declare
Thyself—for thou art every where.
I find thee in the noon of night,
And read thy name in every star
That drinks its splendor from the light
That flows from mercy's beaming car.
Thy footstool, Lord, each starry gem
Composes—not thy diadem.
And when the radiant orb of light
Hath tip'd the mountain tops with gold,
Sinote with the blaze, my wearied sight
Shrinks from the wonders I behold;
That ray of glory, bright and fair,
Is but thy living shadow there.
Thine is the silent noon of night,
The twilight eye—the dewy morn;
Whate'er is beautiful and bright,
Thine hands have fashioned to adorn—
Thy glory walks in every sphere,
And all things whisper, "GOD IS HERE."

SONNET.

Thou changest not! though deep and wide
Death's ploughshare rive—and aged time
Plunge far below the oblivious tide;
And horrors reign through every clime:
Though distant planets rock and quake,
And orbs of fire inflame the skies,
Creation's massy pillars break,
And one loud cry to heaven arise;—
Th' Eternal's throne can never shake!
The earthquake's throes, earth's final sighs,
The tott'ring globe to fragments torn,
The rending rocks, the madd'ning sea,
The star-gem'd vault to ashes borne,
O GOD! affect not, change not THEE!